

NEW ZEALAND

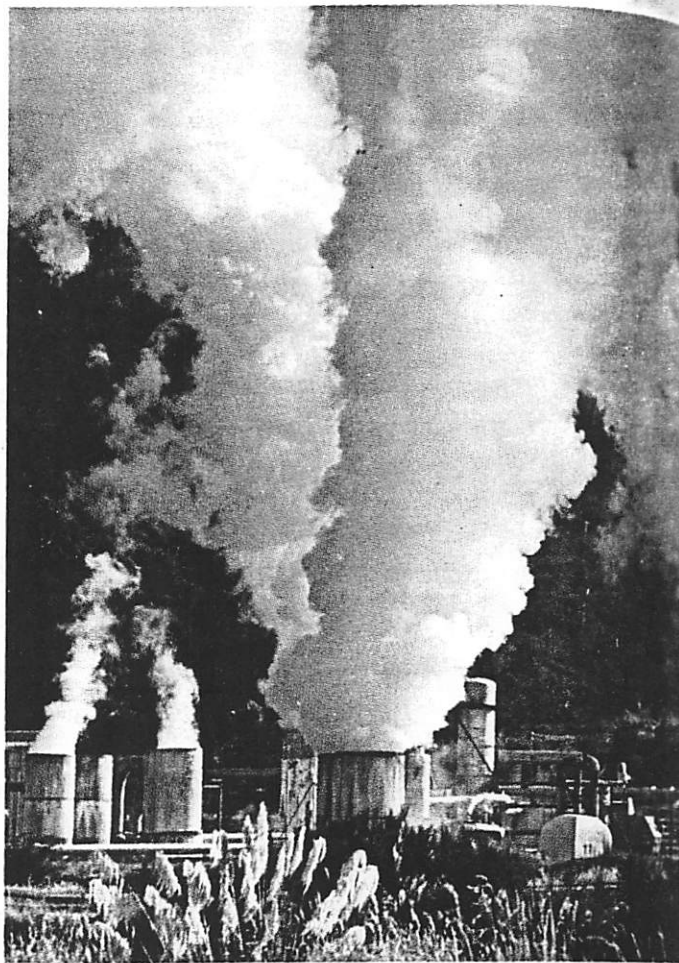
Coastline. New Zealand's coastline is about 3,200 miles (5,150 kilometers) long. Including the bays, fiords, and gulfs, the full length of the coast is about 4,300 miles (6,920 kilometers). Auckland and Wellington, the nation's chief seaports, overlook fine natural harbors on the North Island. The South Island has a few natural inlets in areas where seaports would be useful.

Lakes, Rivers, and Waterfalls are found throughout New Zealand. Most of the lakes lie in the volcanic plateau of the North Island and in glacial valleys near the Southern Alps of the South Island. The largest lake, Lake Taupo on the North Island, covers 234 square miles (606 square kilometers) and is a vacation spot.

On both islands, the rivers rise in the mountains and flow down to the sea. Most of the rivers flow very fast and are difficult to navigate. The Waikato River on the North Island is New Zealand's longest river, flowing 264 miles (425 kilometers). The Clutha River on the South Island carries the largest volume of water. The rapid flow of New Zealand's rivers makes them important sources of hydroelectric power.

New Zealand has hundreds of waterfalls. Sutherland Falls tumbles 1,904 feet (580 meters) down a mountain near Milford Sound on the South Island. It is the fifth highest waterfall in the world.

Animal Life. Most of New Zealand's animals have been introduced from other countries. Deer and rabbits—as well as cattle, pigs, and sheep—were all brought by the European settlers. Two species of bats are the only native land mammals. New Zealand has no snakes. But the tuatara, a native prehistoric reptile, still lives in New Zealand (see ANIMAL [picture: The Tuatara]).



Brian Carroll, Photographic Library of Australia

Natural Steam rises from a large volcanic plateau in the center of the North Island. Engineers harness the geothermal steam to generate electricity. The region also has geysers and hot springs.

Earthquakes. New Zealand has about 400 earthquakes every year, but only about 100 of them are even strong enough to be felt. The country's most disastrous earthquake occurred in Hawke Bay in 1931. It killed 255 persons and badly damaged the cities of Hastings and Napier.

AVERAGE MONTHLY WEATHER

AUCKLAND						CHRISTCHURCH					
	Temperatures				Days of Rain or Snow		Temperatures				Days of Rain or Snow
	F.°		C°				F.°		C°		
	High	Low	High	Low			High	Low	High	Low	
JAN.	72	53	26	12	10	JAN.	66	41	30	5	10
FEB.	72	53	26	12	10	FEB.	63	41	28	5	8
MAR.	77	51	25	11	11	MAR.	61	37	27	3	9
APR.	73	47	23	8	14	APR.	76	33	24	1	10
MAY	67	42	19	6	19	MAY	69	29	21	-2	12
JUNE	63	29	17	4	19	JUNE	62	26	17	-3	13
JULY	62	28	17	3	21	JULY	61	26	16	-3	13
AUG.	63	27	17	4	19	AUG.	65	26	18	-3	11
SEPT.	65	41	18	5	17	SEPT.	70	30	21	-1	10
OCT.	68	44	20	7	16	OCT.	73	32	24	0	10
NOV.	73	47	23	8	15	NOV.	77	36	26	2	10
DEC.	76	50	24	10	12	DEC.	84	39	29	4	10

Source: Meteorological Office, London.